

From Page to Screen: The Rise of Digital Literature in Pakistan

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Received: 04-07-2025	Revised: 22-08-2025	Accepted: 04-09-2025	Published: 18-09-2025
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ABSTRACT

In this article, the introduction of digital literature, i.e. Instagram poetry, You Tube spoken word, Wattpad and Blogs and online journals are recorded. In Pakistan, argues that the digital contexts are transforming the circumstances of literary production, readership, and censorship in the past few years. Employing a qualitative, exploratory research approach, Digital Humanities (DH) provides a useful theoretical lens for examining the transition of literature in Pakistan from print to digital forms. Utilizing elements of digital ethnography to better understand the rise and development of digital literature in Pakistan, this research shows how platform affordances (visual design, interactivity, multimodality) shape new genres and promote new readerships, act as potential sources of empowerment for marginalized communities, and also, in the same breath provide new sources of vulnerability in the face of state and platform-level censorship. The article concludes to identify implications for researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to consider digital literature studies in Pakistani curricula and to think, create, and act in ways that create and support safe, ethical digital literary spaces.

Keywords: Digital literature; Instapoetry; Spoken word; Wattpad; Online magazines; Censorship; Digital humanities.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past ten years, Pakistan has moved away from conventional modes of literature - print newspapers, magazines, academic journals, and books - and towards new formats along the continuum of mobile phones, tablets, and laptops. Younger generations of authors and poets do appear to be starting their roads to publication through Instagram, YouTube, and Wattpad, along with other personal blogs.

They also have Facebook groups, Telegram channels, and other digital journals to continue their literary journey. The shift from page to screen seems to require more than a mere change of medium; it represents a shift in the ways literature is made, disseminated, and expended that changes genre and performance, as well as the reading experience, and the author-reader/audience relationship. Here, through being social, aesthetic experiences, instapoetry creates communities of feelings across time, space, gender, and nationality (Matthews, 2019, pp. 404-405). This article explores the use of digital media in spoken word poetry in Pakistan and its consequences for today's poetry. Many digital spoken word performances are intermedia artworks, and the poetics of digital literature can inform spoken word studies (Paul, 1998, p.2). As technology advances, books and writings have also become digital. Online resources provide free reading and writing possibilities, as well as access to high-quality information. Youngsters like reading and writing in online groups. Wattpad is a popular free online reading and writing community for young people. It offers access to several languages, with English being the major language. Wattpad is predominantly utilised by young writers (Kuşcu Kıyak, 2015). The emergence of digital media in Pakistan has changed the literary scene significantly, allowing authors and readers to interact outside print. Online blogs and literary magazines have emerged as spaces for new types of creative writing, criticism, and cultural discussion, and unlike print magazines, digital platforms are a faster, more accessible and engaging way for both new and established voices to gain traction (Ahmad, 2020, pp. 112-126).

While there is an increasing volume of work on global digital authorship, Instapoetry and fanfiction studies, work on Pakistan is still limited. This study seeks to provide a firstly qualitative examination of digital literary culture in Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Global scholarship on Instapoetry and digital poetry

Studies on Instapoetry suggest that the platform's built-in features—such as short captions, square images, and the algorithmic feed—shape its style and aesthetics. Such affordances promote aphoristic, brief lines and typically prefer themes that are confessional, and the work of Rupi Kaur is one of the most prominent influences. Researchers note both its democratizing impact that has enabled more people to read it, and its drawbacks, such as claims of oversimplification and commercialization. Literary critic Alyson Miller looks at the disruptive nature of instapoetry, its subversive and successful forms (Miller, 2021, p. 123). Miller believes that the poetic practice should have offered a platform to marginalized voices (Miller, 2021, p. 163). It can be linked to the participatory turn, which has a foothold on social media and, in case of success, can get amplification of the expressions, which would not pass the gatekeepers of the literary world. Miller, therefore, makes a connection between how democratized publication also goes hand in hand with a participatory relationship between authors and readers, as well as contributing to a democratized language that is accessible and immediate (Miller, 2021, p. 167).

Manning considers instapoetry's most essential and distinguishing traits to be poetry that is open to interpretation in a variety of ways (Manning, 2020, p. 302). Lotman views instapoetry as popular culture by positioning it inside a wider reading emotional reading experience (Lotman, 2021, p. 76). Cultural studies scholar Anna Kiernan, in her book chapter on instapoetry in *Writing Cultures and Literary Media* (2021), addresses the particular mode of publication of instapoetry compared to other printed literature (p. 46). She further concludes that the poetry of Kaur and similar poets poses a threat to the value of complexity (p. 54), by noting it has an “informal and self-referential style” (p. 48).

A prominent way of doing research on instapoetry is to be guided by the dominant poets, such as Yrsa Daley-Ward (Manning, 2020) or the more prominent Rupi Kaur. This either results in specific research on

Rupi Kaur and/or her poetry, or on the poet as performer, creating a particular performative context for the poetry, where the self is constructed and reflected into the poetry. Rupi Kaur is explored through viewing her created persona as intimately tied to the poetry and Instagram (Alsaigh, 2022; Aman, 2022; Chasar, 2020; Kiernan, 2021; Kruger, 2017; Miller, 2019; Trajković & Anđelković, 2023). From these studies, aspects such as Kaur's publication and creation of a narrative are highlighted.

Here, also giving a nod to a language-centric idea of poetry, where poetry is framed instead of being given shape. Kiernan similarly focuses on Kaur as a commercial poet and seeing herself as a commodity, describing Kaur as a "poet-entrepreneur" (Kiernan, 2021, p. 52). Chasar employs Kaur as a case study in the same way in his chapter on instapoetry in *Poetry Unbound* (2020), but he is a little more sympathetic when he characterises Kaur as someone who draws on social media entrepreneurially and avoids the usual obstacles (Chasar, 2020, p. 184) (here, focusing on sociological explanations as well). Chasar's main argument for this is that changed conditions shape relations between poets and their voices, and Instagram is a particular instantiation of a relation between a poet and a voice, which is recognized by immediacy and authenticity (Chasar, 2020, p. 187).

Spoken Words in Digital Age

Traditional scholarship on spoken-word emphasizes the inseparability of voice, body, and performance from the text; the performer's embodied presence is part of meaning-making and identity construction. In Somers-Willett's work, especially *Spoken Word Poetry and its Counterpublics* (2014), she argues that spoken-word is not just entertainment but also a political and cultural practice. It creates counterpublics—alternative spaces where marginalized voices (women, Black, queer, working-class communities) can challenge mainstream narratives. She underlines how performance (voice, body, style) is put in the middle of the manifestation of identity, resistance, and belonging, and spoken word is a literary and social action (Willett, 2014, p.20).

Therefore, on YouTube, performers modify voice delivery, facial expression, framing and editing to build a consistent image in the public or poets voice, where the limits between live authentic performance and mediated self-curation are obscured. This corpus-based literature postulates that online videotapes save numerous performance indicators and enable performers to perfect and reproduce an iced-over popular self over time (Al-Hariri, N., and Omar, S, 2023, p. 45-63).

Mediating Texts: Digital Humanities in the Present Scholarship.

The Digital Humanities (DH) has become a distinct field of practice that has altered the way we treat literature, culture, and technology. Digital Humanities comes in handy during the integration of publishing and computing with media and culture, when the literary studies are involved. It provides a special outlook on the impact of digital technologies on the production and reception of texts. Within what Kirschenbaum identifies as the core of the field, authors have proposed the argument that it is no longer the case that things are merely being turned into a form of digital form- and that it is actually a matter of reconceptualizing the ontology of literature and that the media environment is changing (Kirschenbaum, 2008, p. 4). The digital texts in *Mechanisms*, he observes, are intrinsically distinct to the printed texts in the sense that they are modifiable, constructed of levels and that they are soft in the sense that they are published on a base of technologies, and this has far reaching implications on the preservation and study of the texts.

The main argumentative thread in DH scholarship is on the necessity of media-specific criticism. In *Electronic Literature: New Horizons of the Literary* (2008), N. Katherine Hayles notes that when digital texts are not linked to the technological forms on which they are produced it is akin to cutting meaning off the medium (Hayles, 2008, p. 28). This argument is applicable in the analysis of the literary texts found on platforms such as Wattpad, Instagram, or YouTube, where visual design elements, hyperlinks, and algorithms influence the constitution and the reception (Hayles, 2008).

Digital Literature in Pakistan

Academics, researchers, educators, experts, and legislators worldwide see digital skills as essential for job opportunities, lifelong learning, and active social and economic involvement. According to Pawluczuk et al. (2019), people who are capable of using digital assets and resources are more competent and favoured in various aspects of their lives, including education, career growth, citizenship, and social activities (e.g., online shopping, social networking). In Pakistan, work on digital literature is in its nascence but growing. Recent readings of the Pakistani Instagram poem speak to a creative digital culture that offers both the narrative witness of globalization by speaking with local voices and is bound to the forms that circulate globally. Such poise is achieved by writers who draw on South Asian cultural codes and use Urdu/Hinglish code-switching. Online journals and anthologies like The Aleph Review and The Missing Slate represent Pakistan's hybrid literary ecosystem that combines digital and print forms. Concurrently, media and cyber law scholarship makes the authoritative point that controls on digital expression condition what it is possible to publish and circulate in Pakistan (Bajri, I. A & Al-Amshani, B, 2019, 455-461).

METHODOLOGY

The type of research is qualitative, qualitative research examines feelings, thoughts, or experiences. During the exploratory phases of study, scholars employ qualitative research to explore new viewpoints or patterns. To learn from non-numerical data, a method known as qualitative research was established. It might be semi-structured, unstructured, or non-statistical. The goal of qualitative research is to understand how individuals experience their printed to digital environment (Creswell, J. W, 2007). The qualitative technique of research is a comprehensive strategy that drawing on elements of digital ethnography to examine how digital literature is emerging and evolving in Pakistan. Given that digital literary culture in Pakistan remains relatively under-researched, an exploratory approach is well-suited for identifying its forms, practices, and broader socio-cultural implications.

Digital Humanities Theory

Nancy Catherine Helyes is an American literary critic who is known for her work in literature and science, electronic literature and American literature. His study usually focuses on "the relationship between science, literature and technology". He is a prominent player in digital literature and digital humanities. In *writing machines* (2002) and *electronic literature* (2008), she examines that when they go on screen from paper, with emphasis on materiality, avatar and moderate uniqueness, one of the most important contributions to DH theory is that digital texts do not have stable items, but technically developed cultural artifacts develop. For example, literary functions on Instagram or Wattpad do, visual design, hashtags and algorithm rely on visibility, which are in the form of integral organs of their form. N. Catherine Helyes emphasizes that digital literature requires a "media-specific analysis", where moderate and form are inseparable (Helyes, 2008, p. 28). Digital Humanities (DH) provides a valuable theoretical structure to analyze the change of literature in digital forms from Pakistan. At its core, the DH checks

how the technology re-shapes the production, circulation, and reception of the texts, which leads to the literature beyond the fixed limitations of prints in dynamic, multimodal and interactive spaces. In Pakistan, where the literary culture focuses on history -printed magazines, book fairs, and oral traditions, Instagram poetry, VIT Tap AD -deaf communities, literary blogs and YouTube spoken words are more than a digital platform so that it is part of all literary experience. Through this lens, the DH illuminates how the hybrid forms of expression challenge the traditional understanding of literature by placing multimodality, and interactivity in the foreground.

Therefore, the application of the principle of DH in digital literature in Pakistan shows how the literature is rebuilt by technology, form and readers. It puts Pakistani digital texts in global discussions on multimodality, algorithmic rotation and participating culture while placing local challenges such as censorship, inequality and linguistic hybrids. Treatment of digital literature is not just a text but as a social-technical practice, DH. Provides a comprehensive structure to understand Pakistan's ongoing transition from page to screen.

RESULTS

Instagram poetry: brevity, visuals, and affect

Instapoetry has been platformized. Platformization is described as the growth of markets, infrastructure, and governance frameworks as they intersect with the infrastructures and logics of social media platforms and associated infrastructures (Poell et al, 2021, p. 5). This also includes cultural organization, cultural production, and the evolution and reconfiguration of cultural practices (Poell et al., 2021, p. 7). Poets on Instagram from Pakistan use short but highly charged phrases almost always set off by minimalist images or typography. The application has aphoristic remarks on love, healing, or gendered experiences, in the main reflecting global Instapoetry trends, with their own spin on salient Pakistani societal norms, Urdu lexemes, and South Asian family themes like Tahzeeb Hafi says, "My poverty has taken everything away from me. My mother used to say that money is not everything" (Instagram, n.d). A culture of re-sharing on Instagram (story, saved) works its way into rapid circulation amongst an adolescent-sized audience. While these affordances enhance access, they also draw flak for oversimplifying and commercializing grief. The study of instapoetry is, of course, fairly new and does throw up a few concepts. There are a number of approaches; however, what ties these approaches together is a humanistic penetrating investigation into the cultural artefacts of instapoetry, their surroundings, and how to decolonise these poems. The contributions arise from the humanities or from areas in the transdisciplinary humanities. Instapoems as photo posts on Instagram constitute a key component in the medial structure of instapoetry. According to Instagram researcher Professor Lev Manovich, Instagram is a platform for aesthetic visual communication, with posting practices focused on creating visual images that communicate through "techniques, styles, and visual choices—and not only content" (Manovich, 2017, pp. 40-41). Manovich contends that the substance of the material cannot be detached from its wider meaning: Instagram (p. 39). A poetry created as user-generated content carries the platform's stamp (Edoro-Glines, 2022, p. 529). This implies that when a poem is created as social media material, it is intended to be seen—and experienced—on this platform. This is true whether the poetry is a snapshot taken from the platform or a digitally generated rendition. On Instagram, a poem is a post. This, like a tweet or a codex, is a mechanism for spreading information. This media item includes captions, conversations, hashtags, and other information (p.27).

A separate but significant effect of instapoetry as picture postings is that words are produced and represented via writing. Thus, instapoetry is a form of communication in which syntax and typography

play a part in delivering instructions about how to read. This is a conceptualisation of the ritualistic part of the lyric from Jonathan Culler's *Theory of the Lyric* (2017). Culler's key point is that songs are ritualistic because they provide "memorable writing to be received, reactivated, and repeated by readers" (p.37). They have something about them that makes you want to do it again. Culler describes lyrics like this as "texts composed for reperformance" (p. 37). However, unlike Culler's printed sheet lyric, there are other interactions at work, and the ritualistic component of recurrence in instapoetry is influenced by its relationship to the platform. For example, knowing how the act of sharing on the platform transforms the reader into a performer of the words, as well as how the poetry lends itself to being reproduced, modified, or simply reposted. The lyric designed for repetition works effectively in an ecosystem whose circulation is based on repeated acts and interactions. It takes on the shape that allows it to move and be spread according to the distributional processes in the media ecologies of which it is a part, while also altering these processes reciprocally (Kovalik & Curwood, 2019; Ty, 2018).

YouTube Spoken Word: performance, identity, and publicness

Spoken words is a performance-based type of poetry that prioritizes voice, rhythm, and emotion above written form. It is sometimes associated with slam poetry, social commentary, personal identity, and narrative. YouTube spoken words refers to the art of performing, recording, and distributing content via YouTube. Javon Johnson, a well-known American spoken word poet, writer, and professor at the University of Nevada, claims that writing and performing poetry allows one to "both navigate and face" the realities of societies where disparities and prejudices prevail (Johnson, 2010, p.402). Spoken word poetry has become a medium of expression for individuals disenfranchised by dominant discourse and established media channels, and in some of its forms, these forms, however, are not immune to becoming exclusive themselves, since many of them seem as 'boys' clubs,' with no representations of female identity and masculine privilege enforced by the objectification and sexualization of women's bodies (Johnson, 2010: 404). As a reaction to this masculine gaze, several female spoken word artists have developed to claim a feminine identity not defined by male fantasies. There are various clever methods in which female poets use form and, to a lesser degree, other poetic symbols to give voice to a positive female viewpoint and seek influence in their own portrayals. This study, which focusses strategically on the poems '*hi, i'm a slut*' by Savannah Brown and '*A Poem on Flo Rida's Blow My Whistle*' by Hollie McNish, examines the approaches employed by female spoken word poets to challenge and even critique this traditionally male-dominated form, establishing a space for female voices to be heard on YouTube. Spoken word is more than simply poetry; its strength stems from the performance component, as poets stand on stages in front of audiences. As an illustration, the repeated phrase 'hello, i'm a slut' seems to be the most obviously acted portion of Brown's poetry, indicating a plainly feminine identity as determined by the masculine gaze. As a result, the spoken word provides a venue for identity creation and declaration, and it is well-suited to reflecting identity concerns and challenging the female identity established by the male gaze (Somers-Willet, 2005: 53).

Hence, the spoken-word artists of Pakistan are performing their identity driven performances on YouTube by migrating, expressing class, speaking about mental health, and opposing political views. The performative feature (i.e., voice, gesture, video context) intensifies emotional involvement; sometimes it can reach far wider audiences than print poetry readings. But the public dimension of video invites artists to public criticism and- in some cases actually-withholds the warnings of the takedown by the platform on political grounds. Some such recent legal cases and court orders are directed at restraining particular channels that indicate how political concerns can engage authors in their work. YouTube has warned over two dozen young anti-Pakistani government opponents that it is planning to block their channels as a local court attempted to ban them for being 'anti-state' (YouTube- Reuters, 2025).

The Islamabad judicial magistrate court, in a recent move, said that it would like to seek this after the NCCIA condemned the channels in a June 2 report for "explicitly intimidating, provocative and derogatory contents relating to state institutions and officers of Pakistan."

Digital rights activists contend that any such restriction would further aggravate free expression in Pakistan, where the state is accused of mouthing promises to suppress newspapers and television, and by and large, the popular electronic media is seen to be the only channel of opposition.

"This week, YouTube informed 27 content producers that their channels could be lived on the line of a court's obedience to demand compliance. According to a court notice seen by Reuters "If you fail to comply with our local law obligations, we may comply with the request without further notice," said the popular video sharing platform in emails during that week to YouTube channel owners." Such criminal provisions must be awaited by the former state minister of interior of Pakistan's home affairs Talal Chaudhry said. Community participants also threatened penalties of corruption regarding cameras. "You cannot use these cell phones and social media to create chaos," he told local Geo News TV. "There are laws to regulate, and they will have to work under these laws," he told reporters. In addition, Asad Toor, one of the journalists with over 333,000 YouTube followers, said that the action was intended to undermine people's basic and constitutional rights, as well as political parties and other dissident movements. "This isn't about me. It is about these people on the left side of the state," he told Reuters. "I have dedicated my platform for these underdogs who have no place to go to and raise their voices against the state oppression (Reuters, 2025).

Consequently, spoken words not only expresses the political freedom through social media power but also showing through the form of poetry that indicates the contemporary society where there is the youngest poet who has access to write anything on YouTube channels and other digital platforms. Hence, there is Spoken word Youtuber poet Abdullah Qureshi who writes *Dastaan/Tale*. The following excerpt:

“How, just like that, I implanted you in my memories, laughing
As if you came in a honeyed dream, and vanished
My solitariness, my shadows
Ask you not to leave
And if you do, please, leave your divine light behind”

(Qureshi,2024)

These lyrics capture the fleeting yet redeeming power of love, portraying the beloved as ethereal and unreachable. "Honeyed dream" imagery hovers above sweetness, surrounded by transience, while "solitariness" and "shadows" emphasis the speaker's lack of wholeness. The invocation of the beloved's "divine light" is a desire for spiritual trace, even in the face of loss, relying on love as both human connection and radiant light. Overall, the poem discusses remembrance, desire, and the sacredness of everlasting love regardless of physical presence.

Wattpad and serialized fiction: new writers, new genres

Wattpad hosts many Pakistani teen and young adult writers who produce serialized romance and fanfiction. These communities are spaces for emerging authors to practice craft, gain readers, and receive immediate feedback. The dominance of some genres (romance, melodrama) on Wattpad may however limit the view of digital creativity, and the anonymity of some authors make the questions of authorship

and attribution complicated. Online anecdotal communities (forums, Reddit threads) show the platform's active use but little formal literary recognition (Reddit).

The biggest change, however, is that young people in Skardu can post a short story at midnight and have someone in Karachi or Canada read it the next day. Almost all traditional boundaries of geography and institutions have now disappeared. It not only makes publication simpler but also creates the possibility of affecting who has an opportunity to speak and be heard. For example, on Reddit's r/pakistan or r/bookclubs, readers mention Wattpad stories by Pakistanis. "*Stories from Karachi by Muhammad Akber Kazi*". Another story is as named in the same circle; praised for "*all books are pretty realistic.*" by Anamika_writes. "*Ishq in the air*" by Zivera_17 that tells the story of millionaire's love for lust. Lust is sin and sin pay a cost of something good. A millionaire girl traps a needy boy who is struggler and doing multiple jobs to support a family. Lust requires power, fame, luxurious lifestyle to trap someone easily. In short, she trapped him and spoil his life of her vanity wishes (Reddit).

Undoubtedly the most fascinating thing is the tremendous range of voices. Women, rural storytellers, and marginalized groups have benefited from digital venues since they may now publish directly to readers without obtaining permission. Social media poetry, microfiction, and community-driven compositions are now considered viable literary genres (Bal, M, 2018). This isn't literature buried away in dusty libraries or upscale boutiques. It is a part of daily existence. A Facebook comment thread may transform into a live book club, with the author replying to fans as the novel progresses. That level of engagement just did not exist during the print-only period. Undoubtedly, the medium influences the contents. Micro-poetry, flash fiction, and quote-based storytelling are popular genres of writing online (Kaya, et.al, 2019 p.1-16).

And here is a close inspection of a completely different subject. Love and nostalgia have not been totally silenced. They have empowered writers to openly engage in political, gender inequality and social injustices issues, so distinct from the traditional print frame, freed from some of the conventional censors. The boldness, combative attitude, and urgency of tone leaps up (F' Contreras, et.al, 2015). The open gates have invited new prospects. A number of pieces come across as social media stunts rather than literature. Another hindrance to writers in this contemporary era of the internet is short attention spans. It becomes more difficult to find time to read a 300-page book when the audience has been trained to scroll through an endless feed. The temptation is that such literature should become another way of short-lived pleasure, which is forgotten before the next post is received. The hybrid models of publishers are the first publications that appear in online serial parts that are intended to create the anticipation of the printed edition. All book buffs can be engrossed with literary festivals and live streaming. There are more than one side cuts amongst authors on the internet. Book festivals and on-streams are fascinating book lovers. The internet is a give and take sword to the writers. There is certainly an aid in sharing through it, but it also needs discipline (Jaguit, 2015). The very technology that allows posting fast also allows conducting more research, more work, and engagement in more narrative. The Pakistani writing could be brought to certain exciting new locations in the form of interactive fiction, audio readings, and multimedia projects.

The pen did not die out; it only has another paper to be on. The stories of today are not merely on shelves, but they can also be on screens. Suppose we cling to what has ever been good writing in the past, then perhaps this age will not diminish the literature at all, but on the contrary make it larger than ever. After all it is not about the medium. There is no difference between words printed on a page and showing on a screen, they all serve the same purpose; to move, to challenge and to connect. It is the duty of us as both readers and writers to ensure that the stories that we share are the ones that are worth holding on to (Wattpad (n.d.)).

Blogs and online journals: gatekeeping recast but not removed

The Aleph Review and *The Missing Slate* emphasize the reality of plausible literary gatekeeping moving to the Internet; they are even more inclined to publish experimental and hybrid works than many of the commercial Pakistani presses would. Similarly, there are essays and long-form criticisms that are disseminated beyond university presses. Nonetheless, digital gatekeeping replicates inequalities: the network of editors, language skills (English vs. Urdu) and the place of living in the city remains to mediate access (*The Missing Slate*. (n.d.).

The censorship, safety and digital rights.

The implications of the cyber-regulatory environment that exists in Pakistan (through takedown laws and channel block orders that are imposed by the courts) are numerous when it comes to the life of the online writers. Threats, harassment, and legal outcomes are also monitored by organizations and digital activists (see Digital Rights Foundation), the majority of which target women and dissenters, and become a viable, lived practice of survival by countless mediators and actors in digital-literature. This environment poses a risky environment to digital literature, which works well in distribution but is dangerous (Abbas et.al, 2023).

Instagram and its affordance for image with text create short, sharable "Instapoems"; YouTube favors performance; Wattpad has ways for readers to engage with serialized, long-writing in process. For Pakistani creators, each platform is creating different expectations for literary creation, distribution, and mediation. These assumptions to the same media specific and 'the form is the message' theories (Diggitt Magazine. (n.d.).

Digital platforms lower barriers to entry for self-publishing (e.g., print costs). These are benefits for audiences who can consume women's work, writings from diasporic authors, and other lesser-known writers to build an audience. However, with each medium and form emerging visibility does rely on platform algorithms, and networked sharing and promotion; plus entry through and into the English language represent some democratizing features of digital spaces while possibly reproducing the impacts of hierarchies. The legal and social risk to writers is that they must communicate their ideas through coded or indeterminate language pre-emptively or make choices to only share in private groups or distribute anonymously. The general climate of online surveillance, in combination with court orders to remove literature, produces revenge and self-censorship effects that shape not only where digital literature is distributed, but the nature of the writing itself. As a result, researchers and educators need to assess the implications of engaging with digital literary communities within Pakistan (ResearchGate. (n.d.).

CONCLUSION

Moving from "page to screen" in Pakistan is a major change in the ecology of the literary practices. Digital literature offers possibilities of new forms/voices/discourses and by extension creates new disparities and constraints. In order to approach comprehending contemporary Pakistani literature, we should examine these digital genres as a condition of their own, that is, as forms of multimodality and participatory practice that are legal entailments and platforms constraints and sociocultural relation of power. In this article we have begun to provide an initial overview that highlights some obvious research emphases (specific platforms, reader response, intersections) and urge scholars, educationalists, and policymakers to look towards making digital literary culture a vibrant, safe and critical component of contemporary Pakistani literature.

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